

My legislation will repeal the 2007 sunset. If the higher expensing limits are good for our nation's small businesses over the next two years, they should be good for small businesses indefinitely.

Small businesses truly are the backbone of our economy, representing more than half of all jobs and economic output. We should not take small business vitality for granted, however. Rather, our tax laws should support small businesses in their role as the engines of innovation, growth, and job creation.

Mr. Speaker, in difficult economic times, we must do all we can to encourage new investment and job creation by creating certainty and predictability for America's small business owners. The "Small Business Expensing Permanency Act of 2005" will help accomplish this worthy goal. I applaud the Administration for its consistent leadership on this issue, and I look forward to working with my colleagues to enact this much needed legislation.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE OF MRS.
BOY JIN WONG

HON. HILDA L. SOLIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2005

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor the life of Mrs. Boy Jin Wong who passed away on Saturday, March 12, 2005. A resident of West Covina for nearly 50 years, Mrs. Wong was a businesswoman, breast cancer survivor, mother, grandmother, great-grandmother and wife.

Mrs. Wong and her husband, Bing Tew Wong, opened the Great Wall restaurant in the 1950s just as West Covina was growing from less than 5,000 residents to more than 50,000 residents. Her son, Council Member Ben Wong, said "despite her limited English language skills, countless Great Wall customers will remember being warmly greeted by her and her enduring smile." When the Great Wall closed its doors in 2001, then Executive Director of the West Covina Chamber of Commerce, Fred Burkhardt, stated "the Great Wall is an institution of West Covina that is going to be severely missed."

Mrs. Wong is remembered as a generous person and someone who treated everybody as if they were honored guests. Mrs. Wong and her husband donated money for scholarships and to build a school in their home village in China. She was an active member of the community, participating and contributing to numerous local organizations and charities.

It is with pleasure that I honor the life of Mrs. Boy Jin Wong. She will be greatly missed by her family, friends and community.

COMMENDING THOSE WHO FIGHT
BLINDNESS IN AMERICA

HON. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2005

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I wish to recognize the wonderful work of The Foundation Fighting Blindness, The National Eye Institute and Prevent Blindness America, and I

want to commend all patients affected by vision impairment and blindness for their perseverance and courage.

I want to express my admiration for Betti and Carlos Lidsky, who are the National Trustees of The Foundation Fighting Blindness, and whose lovely family has been affected by a degenerative eye disease. They are great examples of perseverance and commitment to the cause of fighting blindness and are outstanding national leaders.

As Co-Chair of the Congressional Vision Caucus, I join my colleagues in the constant effort to help individuals who suffer from vision loss.

My home state of Florida has the highest proportion of senior citizens in the United States, and it ranks fifth regarding the number of people at highest risk of developing blinding eye disease.

Vision impairment is a very significant health problem in our nation, despite being a preventable condition in half of the cases. It has been estimated that the cases of vision impairment and blindness can double by the year 2030 if there is no intervention.

We, as a society, have a profound responsibility to intervene and to take action in order to enrich the lives of those currently suffering vision impairment and to prevent others from developing visual problems in the future.

We must continue to raise public awareness about the dimension of this problem, and to encourage prevention. In addition, we need to improve access to quality vision care, treatment, and rehabilitation services. We need to support continued education, research, and advocacy efforts.

We have had tremendous breakthroughs in research leading to improvements in the treatment of certain visual conditions, which improve the quality of life for many visually impaired patients. More research can be done, and we will enjoy more success. The National Eye Institute has been committed to promoting research since its creation in 1968, and we are grateful to its scientists for their achievements in the advancement of research for new treatments and cures.

I ask my colleagues to join me in commending those who work tirelessly to fight blindness in America.

INTRODUCING THE CONSUMER ASSURANCE OF RADIOLOGIC EXCELLENCE BILL

HON. CHARLES W. "CHIP" PICKERING

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2005

Mr. PICKERING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Consumer Assurance of Radiologic Excellence Bill.

I ask for your support in moving this legislation forward. The CARE bill is an important piece of patient-care legislation. It will improve the quality of radiologic procedures performed throughout the United States as well as assist in reducing the cost incurred by the Federal government for these procedures.

The CARE bill in the 108th Congress had 111 bi-partisan House cosponsors and no known opposition. Passage of this bill will finally provide American patients with national standards to ensure that their radiologic proce-

dures are performed by personnel who are trained, qualified and competent.

I am proud to sponsor this legislation because the safety and quality of radiologic procedures is an issue that affects all of us. Every year, more than 300 million x-rays, CT scans, MRIs and other medical imaging exams are performed in the United States, and seven out of 10 people undergo some type of radiologic procedure. So much depends upon the quality and accuracy of those examinations. After all, if an x-ray is poor, there is a chance that injuries could go undetected or diseases could go undiagnosed.

Most of us take it for granted that the person performing our radiologic procedures is a competent professional. But the fact is, poorly trained individuals examine and treat thousands of patients in this country every day.

The CARE bill will help correct that problem. You see, one of the best ways to assure quality radiologic procedures is to require a basic level of education and skill for the people responsible for performing these procedures.

The CARE bill would provide this level of assurance by amending a previous law, known as the Consumer-Patient Radiation Health and Safety Act of 1981. Twenty-two years ago, this bill established minimum standards for the education, certification and licensure of radiologic technologists. However, when the bill was enacted, compliance by the states was made voluntary rather than mandatory. As a result, radiographers in 13 states and the District of Columbia are unregulated. Even in states that license radiologic technologists, laws vary so widely that there is no guarantee that personnel are adequately educated to use the equipment with which they have been entrusted.

Under the CARE bill, personnel performing radiologic procedures in every state would be required to meet minimum educational and credentialing standards. Each state would then be responsible for regulating radiologic technologists according to those standards.

The current lack of a national standard for operators of medical imaging and radiation therapy equipment poses a hazard to American patients and jeopardizes quality health care. Accurate diagnosis can be provided only when personnel are properly educated in anatomy, technique, equipment operation and radiation safety.

In states where no regulation exists, anyone is permitted to perform medical imaging and radiation therapy procedures, sometimes after just a few weeks of on-the-job training. But performing a CT scan or taking an x-ray involves much more than just pushing a button. The person responsible for performing the exam uses highly technical equipment that emits radiation.

The CARE bill will help ensure that quality radiation therapy treatments are delivered and that quality diagnostic information is presented for interpretation, which will lead to accurate diagnosis, treatment and cure. Poor quality exams can lead to additional testing, delays in treatment, and unnecessary anxiety for the patient. In the end, the public's health is at stake. An underexposed chest x-ray cannot reveal pneumonia, and an inaccurate radiation therapy treatment cannot stop the spread of cancer.

This legislation will also reduce health care costs by lowering the number of medical imaging examinations that must be repeated due to